AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-36. (Cancelled)

37. (Currently Amended) ~~Low-dose tablets~~ Tablets obtained by the direct compression of microgranules which are essentially comprised of:

- a neutral support,

- said neutral support being coated with a polymeric layer comprising at least one pharmaceutically acceptable polymer,

– said polymeric layer being coated with an active layer containing at least one active principle ,

wherein the active principle is located in the active layer but is not in the polymeric layer and the polymeric layer is present between the neutral support and the active layer, and the amount of said at least one active principle is less than 50 mg per tablet.

38. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein said polymeric layer contains in addition at least one pharmaceutically acceptable binding agent.

39. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to the claim 37, wherein the total quantity of the polymer of said polymeric layer represents between 1% and 100% by weight of the weight of the neutral support.

40. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein said polymer is selected among the extended-release polymers and the disintegrating polymers.

41. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 40, wherein said disintegrating polymers are selected from the group consisting of polyvinylpyrrolidone derivatives, starch derivatives, calcium and magnesium salts, alginates and cellulose derivatives, as well as mixtures thereof.

42. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 41, wherein said disintegrating polymers are selected from the group consisting of crospovidone, povidone, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, croscarmellose sodium, methylcellulose, low-substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, sodium carboxymethyl starch and branched starch, as well as mixtures thereof.

43. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 40, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected among hydrophilic polymers with gelling properties.

44. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 43, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected from the group consisting of polymers derived from cellulose, natural or modified natural polysaccharides, galactomannans, glucomannans, succinoglycans, scleroglucans, carbomers and poly(ethylene oxides), as well as mixtures thereof.

45. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 44, wherein said polymers derived from cellulose are cellulose ethers of medium to high viscosity selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose, hydroxypropylcellulose, and hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, as well as mixtures thereof.

46. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 44, wherein said carbomers are selected from the group consisting of Carbopol® 971 P, Carbopol® 974 P and Carbopol® 934 P.

47. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 44, wherein said gums are selected from the group consisting of alginic acid, alginates, agar-agar, carrageenans, carob gum, gum guar, gum tragacanth, gum arabic, cassia gum, xanthan gum, gum karaya, tara gum and gellan gum, as well as mixtures thereof.

48. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 40, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected from the group consisting of

polymers and copolymers derived from methacrylic acid insoluble in water regardless of pH, as well as mixtures thereof.

49. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 48, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected among poly(ethyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, trimethylamonioethyl methacrylate) chlorides.

50. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 40, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected among cellulose derivatives insoluble in water, as well as mixtures thereof.

51. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 50, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected from the group consisting of ethylcellulose and cellulose acetate, as well as mixtures thereof.

52. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 40, wherein said extended-release polymers are selected from the group consisting of mucoadhesive polymers, carbomers, sodium alginate, hydroxyethylcellulose, hydroxypropyl-cellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, gelatin, guar gum, poly(ethylene oxide), dextrin and chitosan.

53. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein said polymeric layer comprises in addition a wax or a derivative thereof, a glycerol fatty acid derivative, or a mixture thereof.

54. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 53, wherein the wax is selected among natural beeswax and purified beeswax.

55. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 53, wherein the glycerol fatty acid derivative is selected from the group consisting of glycerol monostearate, glycerol monooleate, glycerol palmitostearate, and mixtures of the fatty acid esters and glycerides of polyethylene glycol.

56. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein said active layer contains in addition at least one pharmaceutically acceptable binding agent.

57. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein said neutral support is a microsphere comprised of sucrose and of corn starch, of a size between 50 µm and 3000 µm.

58. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein they contain in addition a lubricant in a quantity less than 5% by weight compared to the total weight of the tablet.

59. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein in addition they are coated by one or more layers of film-coating agents.

60. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 59, wherein said film-coating agents are gastroresistant film-coating agents selected from the group consisting of polymers derived from methacrylic acid, from derivatives of polyvinyl acetate, from ethyl acrylate and from derivatives of cellulose, as well as mixtures thereof.

61. (Cancelled)

62. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein the at least one active principle is selected from the group consisting of hormones and derivatives thereof, active principles acting on the central nervous system, active principles acting on the cardiovascular system, antibiotics, antivirals, analgesics and anti-inflammatories.

63. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-~~dose tablets according to claim 62, wherein said active principles acting on the central nervous system are selected from the group consisting of anti-epileptics, anti-Parkinson's drugs, psychostimulants, psychotropics, antidepressants, anxiolytics and antipsychotics.

64. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 62, wherein said active principles acting on the cardiovascular system are selected from the group consisting of antihypertensives, antithrombotics, anti-aggregating agents and cholesterol-lowering agents.

65. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, wherein the at least one active principle is distributed homogeneously.

66. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, provided in scored form.

67. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method of preparation of the ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 37, comprising the following steps:

- moistening the neutral support beforehand using a dampening solution optionally containing a binding agent;
- then applying the polymer to the surface of the neutral support by powdering to form a polymeric layer;
- spraying a layering solution comprising the at least one active principle and optionally a binding agent on the surface of the polymeric layer;
- drying and then directly compressing the microgranules thus obtained;
- optionally coating the tablets thus obtained with one or more layers of a film-coating agent.

68. (Withdrawn) The method of preparation of the tablets according to claim 37, wherein the compressing is carried out using a lubricant at less than 5% by weight compared to the total weight of the tablets.

69. (Withdrawn) A functionalized excipient comprised of a neutral support coated with a polymeric layer comprising at least one pharmaceutically acceptable

polymer and allowing the modified release of the at least one active principle in an aqueous medium.

70. (Withdrawn) A microgranule comprised of a neutral support coated with a polymeric layer comprising at least one pharmaceutically acceptable polymer and allowing the modified release of the at least one active principle in an aqueous medium, to which is applied an active layer containing at least one active principle.

71. (Withdrawn) A method for administering a low dose of active principle to a patient comprising orally administering to said patient a low dose tablet according to claim 37.

72. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 71, comprising sublingually or transmucosally administering said tablet to said patient.

73. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 39, wherein the total quantity of polymer of said polymeric layer represents between 1% and 50% by weight of the weight of the neutral support.

74. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 43, wherein the total quantity of polymer of said hydrophilic polymers has a viscosity higher than 1000 mPa.s, measured in a 2% w/w aqueous solution at 20 °C.

75. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 44, wherein said natural or modified natural polysaccharides are gums.

76. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 52, wherein the mucoadhesive polymer is sodium carboxymethylcellulose.

77. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 55, wherein said mixtures of the fatty acid esters and glycerides of polyethylene glycol are those belonging to the lauroyl macrogolglycerides family.

78. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 57, wherein said neutral support is of a size between 100 µm and 1000 µm.

79. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 57, wherein said neutral support is of a size between 100 µm and 500 µm.

80. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 60, wherein said polymers derived from methacrylic acid are copolymers of methacrylic acid.

81. (Currently Amended) The ~~low-dose~~ tablets according to claim 60, wherein said derivatives of polyvinyl acetate are polyvinyl acetate phthalate and polymethacrylic acid.

82. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 60, wherein said derivative of cellulose is hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose phthalate.

83. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 61, wherein said tablets contain less than 25 mg of the active principle.

84. (Currently Amended) The ~~low dose~~ tablets according to claim 61, wherein said tablets contain less than 10 mg of the active principle.

85. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 71, wherein the release of at least one active principle must be modified over time.